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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 000454

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/31/2010

TAGS: PREL PINR SU CD IS ML NG XY GOI EXTERNAL

SUBJECT: ISRAEL-CHAD RELATIONS ON HOLD; MFA DENIES ANY GOI
MEDDLING IN DARFUR

REF: KHARTOUM 0208

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Gene A. Cretz. Reason 1.4 (B/D)

¶1. (C) Oren Anolik, advisor to the Israeli MFA's director general, informed poloff January 31 that the GOI has sought to reestablish diplomatic relations with Chad, which were broken in 1972. There is no Israeli charge d'affaires in N'Djamena, according to Anolik. As reported in reftel and in the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz, the GOI had been in touch with former Israeli MFA DG David Kimche, who has done business in Chad, in an effort to improve Israeli relations with the Government of Chad. Anolik reported that Kimche's contacts facilitated a meeting with the Chadian foreign minister in the summer of 2004, but his contacts were not successful in arranging contact with Chadian President Deby, whom the Israelis view as the key interlocutor. Anolik said the GOI has reached Deby through other channels on two occasions, but both sides have postponed discussions about bilateral relations until after elections in Chad. Anolik disavowed any Israeli involvement in Darfur politics. Separately, the acting head of the MFA Middle East Division told us January 30 that he knew nothing about any recent GOI moves in Chad or Sudan.

¶2. (C) The Israeli MFA, under former Minister Silvan Shalom and current Director General Ron Prosor, has sought to establish ties with Muslim and Arab states. Prosor's office, rather than the geographic bureaus of the MFA, has the lead on this sensitive issue, which has been a priority during the Shalom era. Probed by poloff on Israeli priorities in the African Sahel, Anolik said only that the GOI is interested in relations with Mali and Niger.

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JONES